

STATEWIDE SURVEY OF PUBLIC VIEWS ON TRANSPORTATION ISSUES

BRIEFING PAPER

Prepared for the
January 2005 Transportation Commission Meeting

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PURPOSE:

Provide update about recent state-wide survey results.

ACTION/OUTCOME:

Information sharing only.

BACKGROUND:

Last May, the Urban Corridors Office conducted some public perception research to learn more about opinions, views and perceptions about transportation issues in the Snohomish, Pierce and King County areas. The results were presented to the Commission in July. Several Commissioners requested that state-wide information be gathered as well.

DISCUSSION:

WSDOT commissioned a state-wide survey to learn about public views on transportation issues including projects, priorities and funding. The random digit dialing phone interviews were conducted October 5 – 28, 2004.

Methodology:

1027 people across the state, including;

- 100 people each in Olympic Peninsula, Clark County, Spokane County, Tri Cities and Wenatchee
- 150 individuals in Spanish-speaking households
- 527 people in other counties in Washington State

Margin of Error:

For statewide results (all 1027 participants) the margin of error is 1.9%.

In the five sub-areas (100 respondents) the margin of error is 5.9%.

In the Spanish-speaking responses, the margin of error is 4.8%.

Questions:

Many of the same questions as the UCO survey were asked. Some were modified for clarity. In general, the questions dealt with transportation priorities, funding, organizations, frustrations, communications and accountability issues.

Highlighted Findings:

- WSDOT has strong favorability ratings across the state.
- Maintaining the condition of roads was the most important priority, followed by fixing congestion and chokepoints, making safety improvements and providing more options such as bus, bike, rail and walking. (current funding)
- Lack of convenience (not enough routes/buses, trips take too long or are unreliable) was seen as the most frustrating thing about transit.
- Congestion and other people's driving were the most frustrating element about driving.
- Most people believe that existing revenues are enough to meet transportation needs.
- The only revenue source to receive more than 50% was to redistribute existing state funds.
- Tolls, flat rate car tabs and taxes based on car weight received about 40% support. The gas tax received a 31% support level state-wide, second lowest to sales tax at 24%.
- 80% of respondents think transportation is a statewide issue that needs the entire state to contribute AND 70% said they support letting local areas tax themselves for local projects.
- Most areas of the state don't agree that if the Puget Sound area taxes itself, there will not be enough support for other state projects.
- The Olympic Peninsula, Clark County and Tri Cities think their local area gets a "good deal" in state transportation funding. The statewide response was 47%.
- WSDOT projects are generally supported across the state.

RECOMMENDATION:

N/A. For further information, contact: Linda Mullen, Communications Director,
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